

# OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS RENDERED BY THE INTER- NATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

*Edited by*

**FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.**

Secretary to the Commission

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## **OPINION 271**

Addition to the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology*  
of the generic names *Equus* Linnaeus, 1758 (Class  
Mammalia) and *Alca* Linnaeus, 1758 (Class Aves)  
(*Opinion* supplementary to *Opinion* 16)

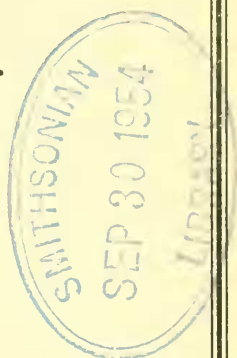
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# INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

## COMPOSITION AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE RULING GIVEN IN OPINION 271

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### C. Alternate Members of the Commission at the Session held in Paris in 1948

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## OPINION 271

ADDITION TO THE "OFFICIAL LIST OF GENERIC  
NAMES IN ZOOLOGY" OF THE GENERIC NAMES  
"EQUUS" LINNAEUS, 1758 (CLASS MAMMALIA)  
AND "ALCA" LINNAEUS, 1758 (CLASS AVES)  
( " OPINION " SUPPLEMENTARY TO  
" OPINION " 16)

**RULING :—**(1) The under-mentioned generic names are hereby placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* as Names Nos. 690 and 691 respectively :—  
(a) *Equus* Linnaeus, 1758 (gender of name : masculine) (type species, by Linnean tautonymy : *Equus caballus* Linnaeus, 1758) (Class Mammalia) ; (b) *Alca* Linnaeus, 1758 (gender of name : feminine) (type species, by Linnean tautonymy : *Alca torda* Linnaeus, 1758) (Class Aves).

(2) The under-mentioned specific names are hereby placed on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* as Names Nos. 93 and 94 respectively :—(a) *caballus* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the combination *Equus caballus* ; (b) *torda* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the combination *Alca torda*.

### I.—THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On 1st September 1945 Mr. Francis Hemming (*Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature*) submitted the following application recommending the addition to the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* of two generic names cited in the "summary" to the Commission's *Opinion* 16 as

being the names of genera, the type species of which had been determined by the principle of Linnean tautonymy, i.e. under the interpretation of Rule (d) in Article 30 given in that *Opinion* :—

**Proposed addition to the “ Official List of Generic Names in Zoology ”  
of the names of two genera, the type species of which were  
determined in “ Opinion ” 16**

By FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.

(*Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature*)

In a paper which I have today annexed, as Note 4, to the re-issue of *Opinion* 16 now in preparation for publication, I have drawn attention to the extremely unsatisfactory state of the names for a large number of nominal genera established by Linnaeus, the question of the type species of which was discussed by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in its *Opinion* 16 (1910, *Smithson. Publ.* 1938 : 31—39). I have suggested in that Note that the uncertainties regarding the type species of those genera should be brought to an end as quickly as possible by the issue, by the International Commission, of an *Opinion* or *Opinions* giving definite rulings as to the species to be accepted as the type species of the genera in question. In the case of two names, however, the Commission did give rulings in the foregoing *Opinion* as to the species to be accepted as the type species of the genera in question, though the rulings so given were obscurely worded. It is the object of the present application to seek from the Commission a clarification of the rulings given in these two cases and to ask that these names may now be placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology*.

2. The “ summary ” given for *Opinion* 16 reads as follows :—

In deciding whether a case of absolute tautonymy is present (under Art. 30d), the citation of a clear pre-binominal specific name in synonymy is to be construed as complying with the demands of Art. 30d. Examples : *Equus caballus* (*Equus* cited in synonymy in the sense of “ the horse ”), *Alca torda* (*Alca* cited in synonymy in the sense of “ the alca ”).

3. The prime purpose of the Ruling given in *Opinion* 16 was, no doubt, to lay down the principle that the citation, in synonymy, of a pre-1758 univocal specific name consisting of the same word as that used for the name of the genus in which the species in question was placed is to be accepted as constituting an indication that the species for which such a synonym is cited is the type species of the genus concerned by absolute tautonymy under Rule (d) in Article 30 of the *Règles*. As regards this part of *Opinion* 16, it is proposed to suggest to the International Commission at its next meeting that it should



recommend the International Congress of Zoology to insert words in Article 30 embodying the principle set out above.<sup>1</sup>

4. There remains to be considered the meaning to be attached to the remaining portion of *Opinion* 16, namely the examples cited to show the operation in individual cases of the principle of what may be called Linnean tautonymy. It would have been so extremely misleading to cite, as examples, cases which did not exhibit the newly propounded principle that it must, it seems to me, be concluded that in the two cases concerned the Commission was satisfied that that principle was applicable in these cases. I accordingly interpret the insertion in the "summary" of *Opinion* 16 of the two examples quoted in paragraph 2 above as constituting—despite the obscurity of the diction used—a ruling that *Equus caballus* Linnaeus, 1758 (*Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 73) is the type species by Linnean tautonymy of the genus *Equus* Linnaeus, 1758 (*l.c.* 1 : 73), and that by the same provision *Alca torda* Linnaeus, 1758 (*Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 130) is the type species of *Alca* Linnaeus, 1758, described on the same page of the *Systema Naturae*.

5. It by no means always follows that current usage corresponds with the provisions of the *Règles*, and there is naturally a special risk that this may not be the case when a novel principle, such as that laid down in *Opinion* 16, is first applied. Fortunately, however, in both the cases here concerned the species which under the Ruling given in *Opinion* 16 is the type species is currently accepted as such by specialists in the group in question. There is therefore no danger that the application of the Ruling given by the Commission in *Opinion* 16 in regard to the names *Equus* Linnaeus, 1758 (Class Mammalia) and *Alca* Linnaeus, 1758 (Class Aves) will cause undesirable name-changing.

6. Accordingly, in order to clear up this part of *Opinion* 16, I now recommend that the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature should place on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* (which, it may be noted, was not in existence when the foregoing *Opinion* was adopted) the generic names *Equus* Linnaeus, 1758, and *Alca* Linnaeus, 1758, with the type species designated in the "summary" of that *Opinion*, i.e. the species specified in paragraph 4 above.

## II.—THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE CASE

2. At the time of its receipt, the present application was registered under the Number Z.N.(G.) 24, the File concerned with

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<sup>1</sup> See paragraph 4 of the present *Opinion*.

matters relating to the re-issue of the older *Opinions*, for it was in the course of the preparation of the re-issue of *Opinion* 16 that Mr. Hemming was prompted to submit the present application. Later, however, it was considered that it would be more convenient if this application were to be separately registered, and it was thereupon given the Number Z.N.(S.) 345.

3. The re-issue of *Opinion* 16, Note 4 of which was concerned with the question of the type species of the nominal genera, the names of which were discussed in that *Opinion*, was sent to the printer on 24th February 1946, but, owing to difficulties arising from paper rationing, shortage of labour at the printing works and similar causes, publication did not actually take place until 28th February 1947 (*Ops. Decls. int. Comm. zool. Nomencl.* 1 : 255—304). The publication of this re-issue elicited no objection to the proposal submitted in Note 4 that steps should be taken to determine the type species of the genera discussed in *Opinion* 16 without any decision being then given on this subject.

### III.—THE DECISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

4. At an early stage of its Session held in Paris in 1948 the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature had under consideration a Paper (Paper I.C.(48) 11) submitted by the Secretary containing proposals for the incorporation in the *Règles* of a long series of interpretations of individual provisions which had been given by the Commission at various times during the preceding thirty years and which at that time were difficult of access by reason of being scattered over more than one hundred and thirty *Opinions*, for which no index existed and of which many were out of print. The Paper so submitted contained a proposal (paragraph 30) for the incorporation in the *Règles* of the interpretation of Rule (d) (type species by absolute tautonymy) given in *Opinion* 16 (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 3 : 81—82). The Paper referred to above was considered by the Commission at the Sixth Meeting of its Paris Session, and it

was then agreed to recommend the inclusion in the foregoing Rule of the interpretation given in *Opinion* 16, subject to two qualifications :—(i) that this provision should apply only to cases where a pre-1758 univocal tautonymous specific name was cited in the synonymy of one, but of not more than one, of the nominal species originally included in any given genus, and (ii) that the foregoing provision should not apply to generic names published after 30th December 1930 (Paris Session, 6th Meeting, Conclusion 30) (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4** : 154—155). It was in the light of the foregoing decisions on the question of principle involved that at a later stage the Commission considered the present application and the associated proposals submitted in Note 4 to the re-issue of *Opinion* 16.

5. The present application was considered, jointly with the proposals submitted in the Note referred to above, by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature at the Fourteenth Meeting of its Paris Session held at the Sorbonne in the Amphithéâtre Louis-Liard on Monday, 26th July 1948 at 2030 hours. The following is an extract from the Official Record of the Proceedings of the International Commission, containing the portion of the decision then reached which is concerned with the present application as contrasted with that portion which is concerned with the proposals specifically raised in Note 4 to the re-issue of *Opinion* 16 (Paris Session, 14th Meeting, Conclusion 54) (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4** : 580—583) :—

THE COMMISSION agreed :—

- (1) to place on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* the names of the under-mentioned genera, the type species of which had been determined by the Commission in *Opinion* 16 :—

*Alca* Linnaeus, 1758 (type species, by absolute tautonymy : *Alca torda* Linnaeus, 1758) (Class Aves) ;

*Equus* Linnaeus, 1758 (type species, by absolute tautonymy : *Equus caballus* Linnaeus, 1758) (Class Mammalia) ;

.....

(4) to render an *Opinion* recording the decision specified in (1) above.

6. Under the regulations governing the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology*, the International Commission is required, when it places a generic name on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology*, at the same time to place on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* the specific name of the type species of the genus so named, if (as in each of the cases cited in the immediately preceding paragraph) that name is the oldest available such name for the species in question. On the present occasion, the International Commission made provision for compliance with the foregoing regulation, when dealing with the generic names which formed the subject of the proposal expressly submitted in Note 4 to the re-issue of *Opinion* 16 (Paris Session, 14th Meeting, Conclusion 54 (3) (a) & (b)) (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 4 : 583), but through some inadvertence corresponding provision in relation to the names of the type species of the genera *Alca* Linnaeus, 1758, and *Equus* Linnaeus, 1758, was not included in Point (1) of the Conclusion referred to above. This omission has been rectified in the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*.

7. The following are the original references for the names which appear in the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* :—

*Alca* Linnaeus, 1758, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 130

*caballus*, *Equus*, Linnaeus, 1758, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 73

*Equus* Linnaeus, 1758, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 73

*torda*, *Alca*, Linnaeus, 1758, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 130

8. The gender of the generic names *Equus* Linnaeus, 1758, and *Alca* Linnaeus, 1758, referred to in the decision quoted in paragraph 5 above, is masculine and feminine respectively.



9. The decision taken in the present case was reported to, and approved by, the Section on Nomenclature of the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948, at its Sixth Meeting held on Monday, 26th July 1948 (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **5** : 120).

10. The Ruling given in the present *Opinion* was concurred in by the sixteen (16) Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners present at the Paris Session of the International Commission, namely :—

Beltrán *vice* Cabrera ; Boschma ; Bradley ; di Caporiacco ; Hemming ; Hindle *vice* Jordan ; Jorge *vice* do Amaral ; Kirby *vice* Stoll ; Lemche *vice* Dymond ; Mansour *vice* Hankó ; Metcalf *vice* Peters ; Riley *vice* Calman ; Rode ; Spärck *vice* Mortensen ; van Straelen *vice* Richter ; Usinger *vice* Vokes.

11. The Ruling given in the present *Opinion* was dissented from by no Commissioner or Alternate Commissioner present at the Paris Session.

12. At the time of the adoption of the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*, the expression prescribed for the second portion of the binomen which constitutes the scientific name of a species was the expression “trivial name” and the *Official List* reserved for recording such names was styled the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology*, the word “trivial” appearing also in the title of the *Official Index* reserved for recording rejected and invalid names of this category. Under a decision taken by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology, Copenhagen, 1953, the expression “specific name” was substituted for the expression “trivial name” and corresponding changes were made in the titles of the *Official List* and *Official Index* of such names (1953, *Copenhagen Decisions zool. Nomencl.* : 21). The changes in terminology so adopted have been incorporated in the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*.

13. The prescribed procedures were duly complied with by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in

dealing with the present case, and the present *Opinion* is accordingly hereby rendered in the name of the said International Commission by the under-signed Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, in virtue of all and every the powers conferred upon him in that behalf.

14. The present *Opinion* shall be known as *Opinion* Two Hundred and Seventy-One (271) of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

DONE in London, this Eleventh day of January, Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Four.

*Secretary to the International Commission  
on Zoological Nomenclature*

**FRANCIS HEMMING**